

Renaissance elite to popular circles. The fact that most of the following discussions are based on texts and legends referring to leading figures in Jewish culture since the end of the fifteenth century is significant in itself. Never before this period did magic penetrate the Jewish elite in such a substantial way, and apparently affect writing and, presumably, praxis. Therefore, the following survey is to be considered a contribution to the understanding of Jewish magic, but at the same time a preliminary study of the penetration of magic into important segments of Judaism, a phenomenon that took place exactly at the same time when Christianity was fiercely extirpating those phenomena that were considered by its religious elite black magic and witchcraft. The synchronicity of these developments is a fascinating issue, worthy of a detailed analysis, which cannot be undertaken here. My task in the present study is much more modest — namely, to offer a preliminary survey of facts and processes that may help toward a comparative study, which remains a desideratum.

I

The transition from the medieval period to the Renaissance in Christian Europe was accompanied by a reevaluation of the status of magic in some intellectual circles. The appearance of ancient bodies of literature, Neoplatonic and hermetic, in Latin and Italian translations, together with the rendering of a significant corpus of Kabbalistic literature into Latin and Italian, precipitated the emergence of a new attitude toward magic, first in the circles of the Florentine literati, and afterward, under their influence, in a long series of European Renaissance and post-Renaissance figures all over Europe. This positive reevaluation of magic was not a simple change from medieval times. Renaissance figures remained reticent, if not manifestly negative, to the popular medieval types of magic. For them, magic was the lore taught by ancient masters like Hermes Trismegistus or Jamblicus, which did not envisage a pragmatic way to solve material problems by appeal to supernal or infernal powers. Rather, it was a lore based on a vast knowledge of the universal order, a knowledge that culminated in actualizing the potentiality inherent in human nature. Instead of being the practice of obscure and peripheral persons, the Renaissance magician came to designate the apex of human achievement, to be cultivated by the elite in order to exercise the human qualities that testify to the fullness of human perfection. It was not so much the subjugation of the material world to which the learned magicians of the Renaissance aspired, as to the fulfillment of their spirit.

The rise of this new appreciation of magic has received due treatment

Jewish Magic from the Renaissance Period to Early Hasidism

MOSHE IDEL

Hebrew University

The aim of this essay is to propose a primary typology of the elite magic of the Jews since the late fifteenth century and to trace the history of its development in a succinct way. Two major types of magic will be presented here: the Italian, which emerged from Arabic sources initially introduced into Kabbalah by Spanish authors of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (it seems to have been neglected by fifteenth-century Spanish Kabbalists, but reemerged at the end of the fifteenth century in Italy); and the Spanish, which was disclosed in Kabbalistic writings since the 1470s in Spain and afterward in the Ottoman empire and elsewhere. After explaining the theories of each type of magic, an attempt will be made to survey the activities of a series of important Jewish figures who undertook magical acts, basing themselves on the theoretical assumptions of either of the types. In other words, we witness the conspicuous manifestation of magical activity within Jewish culture, mostly on the esoteric level, occurring exactly at the same time, in two important centers of Jewish culture.

It should be stated from the very beginning that the following typology deliberately excludes the more popular magic among the Jews, which apparently continued to be practiced in the same manner as for hundreds of years beforehand. However, because the documentation of these practices is rather scanty, it is difficult to assert what could be new, or to pinpoint exactly what could transpire from the innovations of the Jewish

in the studies of D. P. Walker,¹ F. A. Yates,² E. Garin,³ and P. Zambelli,⁴ to mention only the most prominent scholars who have paid attention to this development. Nowadays there is hardly a scholar who can ignore the importance of this phenomenon in the fabric of the Renaissance experience.

However, although the Christian part of this development has been sufficiently analyzed, the parallel and contemporaneous phenomenon among Jews has escaped a detailed presentation, still remaining terra incognita for scholarly research. Based upon traditions similar to those that nourished the Christian reevaluation of magic, texts representing Jewish conceptions still remain in manuscript form and are generally ignored by both Jewish and Christian scholars.⁵ This fact represents an obstacle to understanding in a more accurate way the processes that contributed to the formation of the Jewish reevaluation of magic and magicians. Indeed, certain Jewish writers, starting with the twelfth century, gradually built up a comprehensive magical interpretation of Judaism, presenting a whole range of Jewish rituals as permeated with magical resonances—and all this conceived in overtly positive terms. At the end of the fifteenth century R. Yohanan Alemanno has contrived a full-fledged interpretation of Judaism as the highest form of magical behavior.⁶ Magic was presented as the culmination of his ideal curriculum, including a list of magical works to be studied after the study of Kabbalah.⁷ Moreover, the precise prescriptions of the oral law (Torah shebe'al peh) were regarded by Alemanno in terms similar to, if not identical with, those he used to describe magic.⁸ In both cases, the precise enactment of prescriptions is absolutely necessary in order to attain the religious aim. Let me quote only one example of the high respect paid by Alemanno to magic. Describing the four most important perfections, he writes:

The perfection of the moral virtues, and the virtue of the intellect, the perfection of divine worship [which consists of] various divinatory powers, and the perfection of causing the descent of the spiritual powers by the means of statues and preparations of mixtures of qualities. And these [perfections are referred to by] four names: Torah and Wisdom and the Ephod and the Teraphim.⁹

I assume that this list presents the perfections in an ascending order; the less important perfection seems to be the moral one, followed by the intellectual one, which is apparently inferior to the divine one, which includes revelatory experiences, and then the highest one, the magical perfection. This sequel is not an exception in Alemanno's thought; it perfectly conforms to the more elaborate curriculum he proposed, where

magic is the last and highest domain of study and practice,¹⁰ and Alemanno includes in this last stage titles of magical books to be studied, wherein we may easily find references to the magic of causing the descent of spirituality—in Hebrew, *Ruhaniut*—namely, the powers from above that are invested with magical and divinatory potentialities.¹¹ The gradation of teraphim higher than the Torah is, in my opinion, an extraordinary view, which faithfully reflects the authentic opinion of Alemanno regarding magic.¹² This appreciation is to be compared to Alemanno's view that Moses built the golden calf in order to attract the supernal influx.¹³ These heterodox views bespeak a new and audacious approach to the meaning of Jewish religion, considered to be open to incorporate, into its very heart, elements that stem from magical works.

A century later, the magical understanding of Kabbalah as the apex of religious activity is still evident, under the influence of Alemanno, in Italy. R. Abraham Yagel describes the ideal acts:

Whoever knows how to direct a form against another form¹⁴ and to cause the descent of the supernal influx through its degrees and planes, without turning right or left . . . he will be loved on high and cherished below, and will be capable to change the natures and the constellations, according to his will, just as the prophets and the sages [of old] were doing.¹⁵

Knowledge of the affinity between the structure of the higher and the lower universes, including the human bodily form, permits attraction of the supernal influx upon a human being, thereby enabling that person to perform extraordinary deeds. In the above passage, the fusion of magic with the ideal of religious life is evident. Knowledge of Kabbalah is the first theoretical step, allowing someone to understand the correspondences between what is found below and the supernal world of the Sefirot. Only afterward is the Kabbalist able to apply this knowledge to more magical aims.

Though elevated to a rank higher than even the most esoteric domain in the Jewish view of creation, as the Kabbalah was considered to be, magic seems to have only marginally contributed to a change in the behavior of those who promoted its importance. Interpretation of Jewish ritual as fraught with magical features strengthened the importance of this ritual, and its precise and diligent performance, just as did the theosophico-theurgical interpretations of the Kabbalah. As far as our historical evidence goes, Yohanan Alemanno, Abraham Yagel, and their like, seem to have subscribed to regular Jewish ritual, and we know nothing about magical activities they may have engaged in. Even less than Ficino and Pico, who showed both theoretical and practical interest in magic,¹⁶ Jew-

ish texts do not relate the performance of magical ritual per se. This situation is indeed more bizarre in light of the fact that the performance of magical ritual manifestly stemming from Jewish sources is related in Renaissance texts, whereas the making of a golem is not attributed to Jews contemporary with Christians who performed this practice.¹⁷

We may summarize the above discussion by indicating that as far as Jewish intellectual figures in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century are concerned, the evidence shows an intense theoretical interest in magic, but no practice of magic, beyond the understanding of halakah as a potential magical instrument. Though investing magic with the glamor of the highest human achievement, Jewish Renaissance authors in Italy were not, apparently, prepared to undertake nonhalakic activity.

However, this reticence was less visible among a group of Kabbalists who flourished in Spain on the eve of the expulsion of the Jews and those influenced by them in the aftermath of the expulsion. At the same time when Alemanno was putting together his magical understanding of Judaism, two contemporaries of his, R. Joseph della Reina and the anonymous author of the voluminous *Sepher ha-Meshiv* [Book of the responding (entity)], were committing to writing a long array of magical practices, some of them being put into practice by the same authors.¹⁸ I want to emphasize the fact that these magical practices were performed by at least one of these authors, and it is reasonable to assume that this also was the case for R. Joseph della Reina, who presented them as divine, and sometimes angelic, revelations, and therefore as a manifestly positive form of activity. Indeed these magical practices include rites to compell the divine and the angelic world to answer the request of the Kabbalists regarding theoretical and practical issues. There are several incantations intended to summon the leaders of the demonic world to descend and reveal secrets concerning practical issues, such as the secret of the preparation of gold and silver.¹⁹

What is astounding in these Kabbalistic sources is the fact that these practitioners were ready to relate the origin of magic, actually designated as practical Kabbalah, to God or to archangels, thereby ascribing to it an unprecedented authority as a spiritual phenomenon. Magic was now described as a tradition stemming from direct divine revelation that had taken place in the past and still continued in the present. Instead of instilling magic in the Jewish tradition by a reinterpretation of ritual, as Yohanan Alemanno did in using Neoplatonic, hermetical, and astrological elements, the Spanish Kabbalists resorted to revelation as the major channel of introducing it as a main theological issue independent of classic Jewish ritual or of the halakah. Furthermore, the revelation in-

cluded in the *Book of the Responding [Entity]* insisted that the real purpose of the exile was to destroy the powers of evil, and mete out appropriate justice to the gentiles who were inspired by these powers. As a direct consequence of the divine voice speaking to the anonymous Kabbalist, the author maintained that the time had now come for a complete revelation of the secrets of the law, thereby assuring the Kabbalists knowledge and prophetic power greater than that of preceding generations. Consequently the Kabbalists envisioned the revelation of this magic as part of the divine design to redeem Israel; and as part of this comprehensive revelation, the revealed book that had been composed as it was told by supernal powers, would also enhance religious knowledge in general.²⁰ The ascent and elevation of magic is therefore part of a more profound reformation of Judaism in general, precipitated by the access that Kabbalists now had to the origin of knowledge—the divine, angelic, and demonic realms. Indeed, if the mission of Israel in the exile was to undo the evil of the world and cause a change in the nature of non-Jewish religions, then magic was the most important instrument to achieve such a grandiose task.

Whereas Italian Kabbalistic magic was presented in the context of a philosophic reworking of the Kabbalah by presenting it as congenial to the Neoplatonic,²¹ Aristotelian,²² and later on even atomistic philosophy,²³ Spanish Kabbalists presented their reevaluation of magic in contexts that were extremely critical of philosophy.²⁴ The result of this disengagement of philosophy from the Kabbalah defined this Spanish magic in contrast to the Italian. For the Spanish Kabbalists, magic was a technique to subdue the entire cosmos, beginning with God and ending with the demonic realm. Nature—that is, an orderly course of events that can be deduced from the observation of reality—played no role in the *weltanschauung* of this late fifteenth-century Spanish Kabbalah. Furthermore, any interest in philosophy and in the natural sciences as found among the philosophers was now considered the result of demonic revelations.²⁵ Therefore, all the achievements of astronomy, physics, and mathematics had to be abolished.²⁶ The Kabbalists who preached this abolishment endeavored to propose an alternative science, generated by the revelations they committed to writing. Such a *ciencia nueva* was based upon obvious Kabbalistic assumptions, such as the correspondence between natural processes and the structures of the Hebrew language, and particularly the peculiar properties of the divine names. In other words the new science argued that it was of divine extraction, unlike Greek science, which was considered the artifact of demons. By its assumptions the Kabbalistic magic propagated by the Spanish Kabbalists of the late

fifteenth century was the real alternative to physics and metaphysics. It not only transcended them but made them meaningless.

The Italian magic considered itself the culmination of the understanding of Aristotelian physics and metaphysics. It surpassed them as a science without, nevertheless, compromising their status in a substantial way. One important conception influential in the Renaissance in both Jewish and Christian circles was the Avicennian theory regarding extraordinary powers inherent in the human soul, which—when properly prepared for its separation from the body—might perform magical operations. A philosophical understanding stemming from the Middle Ages was responsible for a Renaissance view of magic. We may properly describe the kind of magic proposed by Alemanno and Yagel as complementing the natural sciences of the Greeks without a substantial claim to supersede them. Magic, according to the sources of the Italian magic as presented by Alemanno, grew out of natural philosophy. This was his reason for his reticence regarding demonic magic, which was totally in accord with that of Christian Kabbalists. According to another Jewish Kabbalist, R. Elijah Menahem Halfan of Venice, there are two types of practical Kabbalah: one stemming from the “right side,” namely from the divine realm, and thus a permissible lore, the other coming from the “left side,” and dealing with demonic issues and, therefore, illicit.²⁷ *Mutatis mutandis*, Spanish Kabbalists on the eve of expulsion considered the historical scene as the major location for their magical activity, whereas their Italian contemporaries regarded nature as the arena where magical knowledge was to be applied.

Even more instructive would be a comparison between the conception of magic in Christian circles, especially Pico della Mirandola, and Spanish magic. As asserted above, the magic described in the *Book of the Responding [Entity]* is, according to its own perception, antinatural. If nature is defined in classical Greek forms of thought, then the cosmology of this form of magical Kabbalah could not coexist with cosmologies of Greek extraction. “Natural magic” would be simply inconceivable to the author of *Sepher ha-Meshiv*. However, it is exactly this expression, *magia naturalis*, that was the only allowable type of magic, according to Pico della Mirandola. In his opinion, *Magia est pars practica scientiae naturalis*, “magic is the practical part of natural science.”²⁸ As against demonic magic, rightly condemned by the church, Pico believed that natural magic is based on *virtutes naturales*, the natural virtues inherent in a variety of objects, which enable someone to establish a link between heaven and earth—namely, a process into natural reality, as against demonic reality, which operates by resorting to demonic powers.²⁹ The Spanish Kabbalah,

on the other hand, viewed as licit the practice of invoking demonic powers and even subduing them. It seems as if Pico referred to a magic of the type presented in the *Book of the Responding [Entity]* when he condemned magic that was demonic by its nature. It is no surprise to find in Yagel the very terminology of magic characteristic of the Christian Italian Renaissance—namely, *magia naturalis*.³⁰ The distance between Jewish elitist magic and Christian Renaissance magic is, indeed, not a very great one: Alemanno, for example, was able to propose the study of a Christian book of agriculture as the acme of the study of magic and, in principle, the peak of all studies in general.³¹

Another outstanding difference between the two types of magic is evident in their respective approaches to the nature of the forces to be manipulated during magic. In the Spanish Kabbalah, the demonic and angelic realms were conceived in strongly personalistic terms, having special names and in some interesting instances their corporeal appearance is described in detail, using traditions that apparently stem from antiquity.³² These superhuman entities were invoked by incantations, and they could reveal various secrets to the Kabbalistic magician. However, in the Italian philosophically oriented magic as exposed by Alemanno and Yagel, the supernal forces attracted by the magician are impersonal powers presiding over astronomical entities; though having also personal names, their appearance is only rarely described in detail, the more common assumption being that they represent natural powers, which can be manipulated by precise knowledge of the cosmos, and orderly nature, which was not supposed to be disturbed by magic. *Grosso modo* we may regard Italian magic as operating in a relatively mechanistic universe in comparison with the mythical picture of the cosmos prevailing in the Spanish sources.³³ In other words, the world of the Spanish Jewish magician would reject the more popular view of miracle, with its assumption of the intervention of God in the course of natural events without the demand of the magician, given the awareness of the powerful magic in his possession, whereas the Italian Jewish magician would regard a phenomenon commonly considered to be a miracle as the extension of an orderly universe beyond the gamut of common perception. Intervention of the divine as a free agent seems to be obliterated, or at least attenuated, by the two kinds of magic.

The difference between the two types of magic is, apparently, the result of two reactions to reality. Italian Jewry, living at the end of the fifteenth century in a period of relative tranquility similar to fourteenth-century Spanish Jewry, was ready to accept a rather stable picture of the world, where magic could transcend natural events without disrupting in a fun-

damental way the order of the things. Italian Renaissance magic is indeed conservative, not only because it elaborates on already existing magical conceptions and because it incorporates them into the common way of behaviour, the Jewish ritual, but also because it does not intend to change reality in a total way so as to inaugurate a novel kind of order. On the other hand, the Spanish Kabbalah focuses on a total reform or renovation of the world. As in the case of the natural sciences, so also in the case of the historical order, magic strives for tremendous change; just as the anonymous author of the *Sepher ha-Meshiv* attempted to free the Jews from the alien sciences originating from the demonic side, so also he tried to liberate the Jews from their exile among demonic forces, represented on the historical realm by Christianity.³⁴ The plight of the Spanish Jews on the historical level influenced the adoption of a more extreme type of magic that was supposed to solve the problem that seemed to be unsolvable on the political and social level.³⁵ The Spanish Kabbalist strove for a profound restructuring of reality, to be accomplished by Kabbalistic magic. As long as types of historical situations similar to the plight of the Jews in Spain before and immediately after the expulsion occurred, the relevance of the Spanish type of Kabbalistic magic became obvious. As long as the relative well-being of Jews in Italy remained in effect, the more philosophical type of magic was prevalent. Because Italian Jewry did not undergo tremendously painful ordeals as Spanish Jewry of the fifteenth century did, the Italian type of magic remained dominant there at least to the middle of the seventeenth century.

In psycho-historical terms it seems that a certain school of Spanish Kabbalah had undergone, in certain hard historical circumstances, a failure of nerves, which pushed Kabbalists to resort to magic as a major way to solve problems. Because the techniques and some conceptions related to their magic seem to be of a very ancient origin,³⁶ we may conceive of this opening toward magical Kabbalah as the explosion of suppressed material; in a period of difficulties, it surfaced and even came to the fore as a vital spiritual attitude to reality in general.

In other words, the interest in magic in the circle of Kabbalists of della Reina can be conceived as an attempt to isolate Jews from their Christian environment by the demonization of Christianity, and by the idea that this religion would undergo a drastic change in the messianic drama. Italian Kabbalists were interested in magic as part of an already existing Jewish tradition that connected magic with philosophy, but also as a part of an integration of Jewish culture in the intellectual ambiance of the Italian Renaissance. From the sociological point of view, magic played opposing roles in the different historical situations.

II

The peculiar type of magic dominant in the writings of R. Yohanan Alemanno was also influential in the writings of the leading Safedian Kabbalist, R. Moses Cordovero. It seems reasonable to assume that the emergence of the astro-Sefirotic magic in Safed was not the result of the influence of the works of the Italian Kabbalist but of his sources emerging in fourteenth-century Spain. If Alemanno's books influenced Cordovero, it seems they did so in a very limited manner.

Yet I should like to adduce one instructive example of hermetic magic as it was exposed in a classic of Safedian Kabbalah, Cordovero's *Pardes Rimmonim*:

There is no doubt that the colours can introduce you to the operations of the Sefirot and the drawing down of their overflow. Thus, when a person needs to draw down the overflow of Mercy from the attribute of Grace, let him imagine the name of the Sefirah with the colour that is appropriate to what he needs, in front of him. If he [applies to] Supreme *hesed*, [let him imagine] the outmost white. . . . Likewise when he will operate a certain operation and he will be in need of the overflow of [the attribute of] Judgement, let him then dress in red clothes and imagine the form [of the letters of] the Tetragrammaton in red, and so on in the case of all the operations causing the descent of the overflows. . . . Certainly in this manner [we may explain] the meaning of the amulets. When a person prepares an amulet for the [Sefirah of] *hesed*, let him imagine the [divine] name in a bright white, since then the operation of that name will be augmented.³⁷

This passage is highly significant, for the Sefirotic system is conceived as instrumental to the attainment of magical activity. However, in lieu of the common spirits that are appointed over the planets and manipulated by the use of colors and clothes, in this instance the magical Kabbalist addresses the Sefirot. It seems that the astral spiritualities were projected into the divine inner realm and presented by using magical categories. The basic technique in this type of magic is the drawing down of divine powers, or the overflow of the Sefirot, in accordance with the needs of the magician.

Cordovero was very well aware of the affinity of his conception to that of astral magic. Immediately after the above passages, he wrote:

All these topics are known and conspicuous to those who write amulets and we have no part in their labor. But we have seen someone who designed amulets which refer to the [attribute] of [stern] judgement [using the colour of] red, and those which refer to Grace in white and those which refer to Mercy in green, and everything [was done] in accordance with what [was

revealed] by true [angelic] mentors, which taught to him the preparation of the amulets. All this [was done] in order to introduce him to the subject of the colours and the operations which derive from the above.³⁸

Therefore, the Kabbalist was cognizant of the similarity between the type of Kabbalah he was proposing and pagan magical practices. Moreover, he considers the knowledge of the preparation of amulets or talismans as a revealed gnosis, which serves as an introduction to the knowledge of the Kabbalah. Notwithstanding the reservation of the Kabbalist regarding magical practice, it is obvious that he was in contact with a person who indulged in these practices and Cordovero even considered his knowledge as coming from above. In any case his reluctance to acknowledge openly the conspicuous affinity of his Kabbalah with a certain type of magic is understandable, a fact that does not detract from the profound similarity and the historical filiation of his Kabbalah to magic.

Moreover, this type of activity is understood by Cordovero as being similar to that of the priests and Levites in the service of the temple. In a passage that was omitted from the above citation, we learn:

When he will be interested in [the influence of the attributes] of *hesed* and *Rahamim*, let him dress [in] white [clothes]. And we have clear evidence from the priests, whose overflow is from the part of *hesed*, and their clothes were white in order to point to peace. And this is the reason that the great priest on the Day of Atonement was putting off the golden [clothes]³⁹ and he put on white ones since the worship of that day was [to be performed] in white clothes.⁴⁰

Therefore, the principle proposed by Cordovero in connection with the religious ritual is the same as that regulating magical activity. As in the case of the magic of Alemanno, Cordovero did not intend to disrupt the natural order by applying to demonic forces that would destroy the natural order. Instead he proposed a type of activity that complemented natural activity, by adding a dimension of praxis based on laws already in existence, but hidden from the eyes of the uninformed. The Kabbalistic activity was supernatural, not because it intruded into the regular course of events, but because its orderliness was of a superior order.

In another passage in *Pardes Rimmonim*, Cordovero quotes an already existing concept of drawing down the supernal efflux, using again the divine names:

Some of the ancients commented that by the combination and permutation of the Name of 72 [letters] or other [divine] names, after a great concentration⁴¹ [of mind], the righteous . . . will receive a revelation of an aspect of *Bat Kol* . . . since he combines the forces and unites them . . . until a great

efflux will descend upon him, with the condition that he who deals with this will be a well-prepared vessel to collect the spiritual forces.⁴²

Inducing the supernal efflux upon the righteous by the combination of letters of the divine names is similar to causing the descent of the overflow of the Sefirot by employing the color technique, as described above. We witness a certain shift from the theurgical ideal so central in the classic Spanish Kabbalah, and represented also in the last quote when Cordovero's source mentions the unification of supernal forces, to a more magical view, represented by the ideal of drawing upon someone the divine efflux. As in the case of the acculturation of the hermetic type of magic into the Jewish ritual in the above passage, similarly in the last one the Kabbalist performing the practice of concentration and pronunciation of the combinations of letters is presented as a righteous — that is, as an ideal — religious type. Though not part of the regular ritual, the above technique is nevertheless considered to be a licit practice.

Moreover, according to yet another passage from the same book, the highest domain of study, which transcends even the study of the *Zohar*, the most important text of Kabbalah, is the knowledge of the "spirituality of the letters and their existence and their combination with each other," for this knowledge enables the Kabbalist "to create worlds."⁴³ This assertion is indeed noteworthy; the spirituality of the letters seems to be omnipotent, and this gnosis is, according to Cordovero, a very rare topic. For our purpose it is enough to mention the obvious magical implication of the manipulation of the spirituality of the letters, an issue to which we shall return later on.

The passages above were printed and disseminated as part of the commonly accepted Kabbalah. They did not meet any resistance or criticism. It would be no exaggeration to assert that they were included in the most influential Kabbalistic collections. No wonder that the Hasidic type of magic and mysticism follows the pattern proposed in Cordovero's work. Let me quote an intermediary source, which may illustrate a certain elaboration of a principle to be found in the preceding texts. According to R. Menaḥem Azariah of Fano, an early seventeenth-century Italian Kabbalist and a fervent admirer of Cordovero:

There is a great preparation inherent in the names of the righteous [, which enables] the dwelling of the divine overflow on them as it is written: "See I have called you by name" and only afterward [it is written] "I shall fill him of the spirit of God."⁴⁴

The name of the righteous, in our case Bezalel, was given as the reason for the dwelling of the divine spirit upon that person; it is not clear what

is the precise meaning of the preparation inherent in the name, but it seems reasonable to assume that it is similar to that related by Cordovero when he referred to the drawing down of the overflow by means of the divine names. It is important to emphasize the fact that the righteous—in Hebrew, the *zaddikim*—are referred to by the Kabbalist, for this is the term that will designate the leaders of the new mystical trend in Judaism, Hasidism. Interestingly, the passage of R. Menaḥem Azariah of Fano was indeed quoted by a Hasidic master, R. David Moshe of Teshorkov.⁴⁵

Under the direct and indirect influence of Cordovero's conception of prayer, the early Hasidic masters understood their prayer in terms of attraction of spirituality from above onto the letters, or more precisely onto the sounds, of the prayer. In one case, the magical implication of this theory still remains perceptible. R. Jacob Joseph of Polnoye, the disciple of the founder of Hasidism, wrote:

The quintessence of the [mystical] intention [of the prayer] is that the person who prays should direct his intention to cause the descent of the spirituality from the supernal degrees to the letters which he pronounces, so that these letters will be able to ascend to the supernal degree, in order to perform his request.⁴⁶

Therefore, the attraction of the supernal forces is understood, according to this passage, as a prerequisite for the ascent of the letters to the divine world, a process that ensures the divine response to prayer. In distinction to the regular understanding of mystical prayer as causing the descent of the divine in order to enable an encounter—namely, a union with the divine—here the more practical, magical possibility is alluded to. Prayer is conceived as a vehicle for the attainment of one's request rather than a mystical ritual.⁴⁷

III

Redemptive Magicians I

The most outstanding difference between the Spanish and the Italian Kabbalistic magic is the fact that the former was practiced outside the classic norms of Jewish ritualistic behavior, whereas the latter was exercised within the frame of halakic requirements. In other words, Spanish Jewish magicians had to operate as magicians in the full sense of the word—namely, to transcend the normal ways of religious behavior in order to attain their aims. It is no surprise that Spain witnessed the activity of the first Jew known as a magician par excellence. According to

the earliest version of a legend, in the 1470s the notorious R. Joseph della Reina performed his famous messianic and magical attempt to invoke the leaders of the demonic world in order to overcome them and allow thereby the advent of the messianic era. I should like to describe briefly this legendary event, a highly influential one, which served, as I shall try to demonstrate in the following discussion, as a blueprint for a series of similar attempts of a messianic-magical nature.⁴⁸

Apparently as a response to a divine call, or according to another version, as an attempt to hasten the redemption on his own account, R. Joseph della Reina convoked his ten disciples in a magical seance devoted to the invocation of Samael and Ammon of No, the two heads of the demons. Using Kabbalistic formulas based on the divine name consisting of forty-two letters, those two devils were forced to descend and were then bound and sealed by the letters, in order to facilitate the advent of the Messiah. Because of a religious fault—della Reina's readiness to perform a Christianlike ritual apparently in a church—the devils escaped the magical knots and the redemption was postponed, whereas della Reina himself was punished in a way that differs from one version of the legend to another.⁴⁹

Before analyzing this legend I should like to make several methodological observations. It is indeed the most famous of the Jewish legends that appeared in the fifteenth century; however, it is far from clear whether the magical attempt of della Reina, as depicted in most of the known versions, reflects, in its detail, a historical event. It is rather unclear, for example, if the allegedly messianic attempt was the initiative of the Kabbalist himself, as in the common versions of the legend, or whether it was a command from above that generated the abortive attempt.⁵⁰ Moreover, it is unclear if the negative attitude to della Reina, which was expressed by several Kabbalists, was the result of the messianic attempt, or if it was the result of his use of magic for his personal, sometimes even erotic, purposes mentioned in the sources. However, it is obvious that the main aspects of this legend as summarized above were so understood in larger Jewish circles and influenced their conception of Kabbalah. It is indeed quite possible that we deal here with a tradition rather than a historical event.

Let me now analyze some notable features of this legend. The magician acts here together with his companions, his disciples, not as a single, isolated person. The main, and apparently the unique, goal of his magical activity was not personal profit, nor that of another single person or group. The magical ritual was undertaken by a group for the benefit of the entire people of Israel. Therefore this magical performance was a

redemptive act, whose repercussions transcended the circle of the magician in both time and place.

As we know, the magical *dromenon* that involves the encounter with the sinister forces is fraught with dangers for the magician. In our case, the attempt to subdue the heads of the demonic forces is even more perilous, as the end of the legend obviously shows. However, for the benefit of the entire people of Israel, the magician was ready to undertake this tremendous ordeal to confront Samael and Ammon of No. Therefore, according to this magical practice, the redemptive magician was obliged to confront the demonic forces in order to achieve his aim.

It would be important to compare the phenomenology of this confrontation, as well as others to be mentioned shortly, with the famous encounter of the Christian magician par excellence, Faust, with the devil. Motivated by an extraordinary willpower and knowledge, Faust was ready to sell his soul in order to attain his desires; concerned solely with his individualistic curiosity and fascination with pleasure, he signs a pact with the devil. In both cases, the final result was similar; the magicians lost their salvation. If della Reina has become the paragon of the Jewish magician who failed and paid his eternal salvation for his failure, it is Faust who became his Christian counterpart.⁵¹ They thus represent two main types of understanding the possibilities inherent in the encounter with the "other side," as the demonic powers are designated by Kabbalists. The Christian intended to exploit this encounter for his own benefit, whereas the Jew for the salvation of the many. The first tried to profit from his meeting in order to enhance his power and knowledge; the other used his magical power and knowledge of which he has already possessed and placed himself in a perilous situation that could only endanger his well-being. There are, no doubt, also more individualistic aspects of magic practiced by della Reina. The most important similarity with Faust, or with the conception of satanism as conceived by the church, is the description of della Reina as a sinner whose main transgression was that he, deliberately or not, worshiped Ammon of No, the vicar of Samael.⁵² According to a certain tradition, della Reina brought down Ammon of No so that several persons, including a certain Christian king, were able to see him.⁵³ This public descent of the devil was explicitly forbidden in the *Book of the Responding [Entity]*, and it seems that this performance was possible only by transgressing another taboo put on this type of magic, using incense as part of his magical practice.⁵⁴ Therefore, it is important to note that della Reina was not the ideal magician who failed when attempting to be helpful to his people. However, even acknowledging this mixture of good and evil elements, he still represents a

fascinating example of the redemptive nature of Jewish magic since the late fifteenth century.

Confrontation between the Jewish magician and the demonic forces has a conspicuous religious character. Far from being a cult similar to that of magical satanism held by the Inquisition⁵⁵—namely, a worship of Satan as an independent power—the Spanish Kabbalists received their revelation concerning the demonic system from a divine source, and they used the knowledge of the structure of the demonic world to demonstrate the presence of God, as the God of the people of Israel.⁵⁶ Moreover, the magician was at the same time a Kabbalist who received revelations whose essence was the reinstatement of the pristine science and the victory of Judaism over Christianity and Islam in the messianic eon. Therefore the confrontation of the magician with the powers of darkness "really" reflected a confrontation between the leading religions, a war waged by Kabbalists who considered themselves the emissaries of God. The sign of the victory of Judaism would be the transformation of the demonic forces presiding over Christianity into defenders of Judaism, including the Messiah, the son of Ephraim—namely, the secondary messianic figure destined to die in the final battles, in order to ensure the victory of the Jews.⁵⁷ The religious dimension of this conversion is obvious and it is apparently achieved by a magical transformation of the enemy into a friend. Della Reina is, according to the standards of the *Book of the Responding [Entity]*, the paragon of Jewish magico-religious activity as revealed by the divinity—namely, the person who endeavored to confront evil in order to ease the end of the exile.

Last but not least; the general nature of the magical activity in which della Reina indulged was apparently considered by him, in contrast to the ideas of his contemporary and later Kabbalists, not an illicit operation to be undertaken because of the plight of the Jews, but the fulfillment of esoteric Judaism as it emerged in the pre-messianic period. According to the *Book of the Responding [Entity]*, the secrets of the *Book of the Zohar*, the classic work of the Kabbalah, were to be revealed before the coming of the Messiah, and these secrets included both the theoretical and the practical Kabbalah, which were, so it is reasonable to assume, identical to the secrets disclosed by God and God's angels in that book.⁵⁸ According to another Kabbalistic writing authored by a Kabbalist who elaborated on the views of *Sepher ha-Meshiv*, the disclosure of Kabbalistic books before the advent of the Messiah was related to the eschatological wars to be waged by the hidden—that is, the lost—tribes, who would be able to overcome the power of the Christianity by using their knowledge of practical magic, which would enable them to command the an-

gels. That anonymous Kabbalist portrays the power of the people of Israel as spiritual, depending, as it did, on the voice—namely, the invocation of the divine names and angels—in contradistinction to the material or corporeal power of Esau, the symbol of Christianity.⁵⁹ Therefore, the appearance of the practical Kabbalah, a euphemism for licit magic, was characteristic of and instrumental for the beginning of the messianic period.

Most of the features of the legend concerning Joseph della Reina's abortive attempt recur in legends related to other Jews who resort to magic in their endeavor to combat Christianity. Thus, for example, several precise details of the version of della Reina's legend are found in an epistle of R. Abraham ben Eliezer ha-Levi in a story whose hero is the messianic figure of Marrano background, R. Shelomo Molkho.⁶⁰ The most important difference between the della Reina version and that of the later figure is the attribution of the legend to a person who had a close relationship with the leader of Christianity, the pope himself. The historical dimension may have influenced the outcome of the legend. If Molkho intended to bring about the abolishment of Christianity by using magic, then his contacts with the pope might have been motivated by his intention to fight Christianity in its very stronghold. Indeed, the visit of Molkho in Rome and his discussions with the pope seem to be hard historical facts, though the attribution of magical activity to Molkho in his relationship to the pope may be pure speculation. However, although the connection between history and magic remains unsubstantiated, the probability that Molkho indeed was motivated by an anti-Christian attitude is also a hard fact. This was put in sharp relief by the Jewish opponent of Molkho, R. Jacob Mantino, who translated a sermon of Molkho into Latin in order to convince Christians, including the pope, as to the real views of Molkho.⁶¹

Whatever may be the correct answer regarding the intention of Molkho when he met with the pope, it seems obvious that a magical ritual, quite similar to that attributed to Molkho, was exercised by another messianic figure in the surroundings of the Vatican in the second half of the seventeenth century. R. Nathan of Azza, the prophet of Sabbatai Sevi, is reported to have traveled to Rome and to have walked around the Vatican seven times, performing *yihudim*—namely, pronouncing combinations of letters of the divine names.⁶² This circumambulation of the Vatican is reminiscent of the seven times that della Reina and Molkho processed around a church, pronouncing divine names.⁶³ In the case of the first two figures as well as in that of the Sabbatean prophet, there are good reasons

to postulate that messianic connotations were inherent in the performance of magic.

I assume that these encounters of Kabbalistic magicians with sinister forces, intended to combat the powers of darkness in order to change the course of history, are representative of the infiltration of practical Kabbalah into elitist circles. Although the term "practical Kabbalah," *Kabbalah ma'asit*, was known since the fourteenth century, it was only since the end of the fifteenth century that it became widespread in Kabbalistic circles. One of the most important texts that uses this term as referring to an important facet of Kabbalah is the *Book of the Responding [Entity]*.

Though there were Kabbalistic authorities who firmly condemned these magical attempts, as passages from the writings of R. Abraham ben Eliezer ha-Levi, R. Moses Cordovero, and R. Hayyim Vital demonstrate, I doubt that these condemnations represent the last word of these Kabbalists. Notwithstanding their overt distancing from this magic, which ended in failure, some of the Kabbalists who explicitly condemned Kabbalistic magicians still quoted unhesitatingly from writings built upon the theoretical assumptions of the demonic and practical Kabbalah, such as the *Book of the Responding [Entity]*, though they undeniably were aware of the common ground shared by the magician and the practical Kabbalah.⁶⁴ Therefore, though those who practiced this magico-messianic ritual were condemned, the fact that the same ritual was reported several times, even after it was explicitly condemned, seems to point to the sensitive chord this activity touched in the hearts of Jews. Waiting as they were for a messianic figure, the attempts to facilitate his coming at the price of endangering oneself was considered something to be condoned even if it represented an attempt to force the hand of God.

If the relationship between these Kabbalists to the fifteenth-century Spanish type of magic seems to be well established, given the fact that the later Kabbalists refer in one way or another to Spanish sources, the case of R. Sampson of Ostropoler is much more complex. According to the recent analysis of Yehudah Liebes,⁶⁵ this Kabbalist, who died as a martyr during the pogroms in 1648 in Russia, attempted to combat Christianity using magical Kabbalah and, like his Spanish predecessors, he conceived Christianity in demonic terms. Again, according to the findings of Liebes, the death of this Kabbalist was conceived as part of the attempt to save the people of Israel; in other words, his martyrdom was an act of messianic self-sacrifice.⁶⁶ At least phenomenologically, the fate of R. Sampson is reminiscent of the redeeming role of the biblical Sampson who, by his death, provoked the destruction of his enemies and the relief of the people of Israel.

Redemptive Magicians II

It seems that another important group of legends having an explicit magical character shares a characteristic with the legends mentioned above. The redemptive character of the creation of a golem is obvious in some of the versions of this widespread story. The Maharal, the legendary R. Yehudah Loew of Prague, created a golem in order to defend the helpless Jews from the threat of Christians.⁶⁷ This function of the golem is totally absent from golem descriptions in the early Kabbalistic sources, which detail the technique of the creation and the nature of this artificial creature. In thirteenth-century Kabbalistic texts, the creation of a golem is understood as part of a mystical experience the Kabbalist underwent. According to G. Scholem, this creative ritual is to be performed at the culmination of the studies of a given person, and therefore signals an individualistic achievement.⁶⁸ Introducing a redemptive feature to this magical activity reflects the profound significance with which magic was invested in Jewish legends.

Redemptive Magicians III

Perhaps the most influential figure in Jewish mysticism who was designated a magician even by his name was R. Israel ben Eliezer, the Besht, called the Master of the [Divine] Name, the founder of Hasidism. A mystic of wide influence, he was conceived as a healer who used divine names as a means for his healing. This perception was expressed in an explicit way by Salomon Maimon, who stressed in his autobiography the magical side of the Besht's activity, especially his magical healing, accomplished with the help of the divine name. According to this author, some of his disciples were also renowned for their successful healing.⁶⁹ Moreover, in a series of legends, the Besht's capability of clairvoyance is reported—that is to say, his ability to see things happening at a remote distance, when looking into the book of the Torah, more precisely into the light hidden in the letters of the Torah.⁷⁰ This light, similar to the ether that pervades everything, was the medium that enabled him to see events taking place at a distance. Although the activity of the Besht had been analyzed on several planes by scholars who tried to present a detailed picture of this founder of a new sort of mysticism, it is strange that their academic research gave no account of the magic in the activities of the Besht. I propose to offer in the following a preliminary suggestion as to the nature of the magic employed by the Besht, a suggestion that could be substantiated by further, more detailed analyses.

Though different in nature, the two kinds of magical activities men-

tioned above share a common concern. Like most other Jewish magicians, the Besht used linguistic techniques. It is this medium that allowed him to perform his magic and it seems wise to try to understand the possible nature of these kinds of magical acts. No direct and detailed reference to the magical theory of the Besht seems to be extant. I should like to propose here a certain way of understanding this magic, based on an inference from two major facts.

1. The most important fact is the peculiar nature of the mysticism introduced by the Besht, which served as the basis for Hasidic mysticism. According to the Besht and his disciples, mystical prayer consists in concentration in prayer and the pronunciation of the letters of the words of prayer as if these sounds were the palaces or the containers of the divine influx that enters these sounds and permits the mystic to unite with the divine overflow. This understanding of prayer is not a new one; as I have already noted, it is a continuation of the Cordoverian theory regarding Kabbalistic prayer. The basic assumption, according to Cordovero and his sources, is that mystical activity is achieved when the divine spirituality descends into the words of prayer. The sources of this Kabbalistic view are magical, "hermetic" views that penetrated Kabbalah in the fourteenth century, and were understood in a more mystical way than that of their Arabic sources.⁷¹ This attraction of the divine spirituality was considered part of magical activity in the Arabic sources. It remained perceptible in Kabbalistic sources and it influenced the meaning of the use of linguistic elements and the divine names in Beshtian magic. As we have seen above, in the quote from the work of R. Jacob Joseph of Polnoye, magical implications of this conception were still perceptible in his formulation of the Cordoverian view of Kabbalistic prayer.

Let me briefly discuss an important legend dealing with the content of the amulets prepared by the Besht:

When R. Isaac of Drohobycz heard of the remarkable powers of the Baal Shem's amulets, it occurred to him that this was most certainly accomplished by means of the sacred Names written in them. So he decreed, "Because of the improper use of the Name of God, the power of the amulets must pass away." And that, indeed, is what happened. The talismans issued by the Baal Shem were now unavailing, having lost their special potency. . . . When the Baal Shem finally realized that his amulets were no longer providing any benefits, he sought the reason. It was eventually revealed to him that it was because of the zaddik R. Isaak's pronouncement. The Baal Shem thereupon wrought a remarkable feat by means of a Kabbalistic combination of the words of the prayer *Ana Bakoah*. As a result of the Baal Shem's feat . . . the Baal Shem confronted R. Isaac.

"Why has your honor taken from me the power of my amulets—amulets which I dispense to help people?" Said R. Isaac, "It is forbidden to make personal use of the Holy Names." "But there is no oaths nor any Names in my amulets," argued the Besht, "save my very own, 'Israel, son of Sarah, Baal Shem Tov.'" R. Isaac, unwilling to believe this, said that it is not possible for the Baal Shem's name alone to possess such awesome powers. Upon opening several amulets which were brought for R. Isaac's scrutiny, he became convinced of the truth of what he was told. Then he uttered the following: "Lord of the universe, if a man earns his livelihood through the power of his own name, what do You care? Restore to him the potency of the amulets bearing his name." And so it was.⁷²

The main point of this story is the awesome powers of the name of the Baal Shem, which could accomplish, alone, deeds commonly attributed to the divine name. It seems highly significant that the proper name of a zaddik was thought to be so powerful. This seems also to be the underlying view of the quotation from the book of R. Menahem Azariah of Fano cited above. Though he was not mentioned in our context, it seems that his views could influence an eighteenth-century figure such as the Besht. In any case another legend associated with the Besht may be instructive in this regard.⁷³ R. Pinhas of Korecz, an outstanding disciple of the Besht, asserted in reference to the Besht that "many years after a zaddik enters the future world, he is transformed into a divine name, and he becomes a light for the fear of God." He had heard this from the R. Zevi, the son of the Ba'al Shem Tov. R. Zevi told him that his father appeared to him in a dream and told him, "In the next world a zaddik is transformed into a divine Name. You should meditate on the Name *Ana Bakoah*, for I am that Name."

As in the legend regarding the confrontation of the Besht with R. Isaac of Drohobycz, here again there is an affinity between the divine name associated with the prayer *Ana Bakoah*—namely, the name of forty-two letters that emerges from the acrostic of the words of this prayer, and the Besht. In the latter story the Hasidic master was transformed into this name. It seems therefore that this was the most important divine name in use by the Besht. Moreover, on the basis of the view of Menahem Azariah of Fano, it may well be that the personal name of the Besht was understood as a transformation of the name of forty-two letters. In any case the magical use of the name of the Besht testifies to a phenomenon described by the Italian Kabbalist. If so, it may well be that, as in the case of the names of the zaddikim mentioned by Menahem Azariah, so also in the case of the Besht, the letters of his name were causing the descent of the flow from above. Indeed, a conception closely related to that of the

Italian Kabbalist is to be found in the name of the son of R. Isaac of Drohobycz, the famous Hasidic master R. Yehiel Michael, the Maggid of Zlotchov. He is quoted by R. Jacob Isaac, the Seer of Lublin, saying that he has seen in books⁷⁴ that "In the letters of *refuah* [healing] there is the vitality of healing,⁷⁵ since that whole Torah is [composed of] the names of God,⁷⁶ Blessed be He." As we learn from the sequel of this passage, the letters of the Torah, qua divine names, draw downward the vitality that is a synonym for spirituality.⁷⁷ Therefore, the function of the letters to attract the supernal spirituality, in connection with the process of healing, was well known in the entourage of the Besht. According to another passage associated with the Maggid of Zlotchov,⁷⁸ in order to help someone in need of healing, the name of the person is to be mentioned together with the word *refuah*, for the "light"⁷⁹ or the vitality that occurs when this word is pronounced dwells on the name of the person and improves his condition. Here the name of the person is the recipient of the supernal overflow. I suppose that the name of the zaddik, the Besht, might function in the same manner in the amulets: its letters would collect the influx and help thereby to cure the sick person. Or, if the word *refuah* was considered to be endowed with curative power, it seems reasonable that this is one of the possible roles of the letters forming the name of the Besht written in his amulets.

2. The second fact is the existence of a magical, "hermetic" understanding of medicine, as revealed in the writings of some Christian figures since the end of the fifteenth century⁸⁰ and later on in the work of R. Abraham Yagel.⁸¹ He, and his possible sources, applied the principle of magic as using the descending flow, to the theory of medicine, healing being achieved, according to this theory, by the power descending from above. This magical understanding of medicine was extant in print in the work of Yagel, *Moshia' Hosim*,⁸² and it could have influenced, directly or indirectly, any eighteenth-century author. Because the magic of the Besht was concerned with healing and his mysticism employed the principle of causing the descent of the supernal flow, I infer that we may see in the theory of magical healing of Yagel an antecedent of the Besht. Indeed this hypothesis seems to be confirmed by a statement found in a Hasidic work. R. Eliezer, the son of the famous Hasidic master, R. Elimelekh of Lisansk, stated that the zaddikim, the religious leaders of the Hasidic communities, "Heal maladies and draw downward the influxes on the entire people of Israel."⁸³ According to other statements in the circle of R. Elimelekh, "The zaddik is like a channel, which draws liquids downward, since he, by the means of his good deeds, will draw good influxes downward on [the people of] Israel."⁸⁴ Such statements can easily be

multiplied,⁸⁵ but it seems that the above assessments are sufficient to testify to the magical conception of the role of the zaddik in the Hasidic ideology.

If my proposal concerning the Cordoverian origin of Hasidic magic is confirmed by future studies, then the conclusion to be drawn regarding the affinity of Beshtian healing magic and Italian magic is that the latter remained influential in the Safedian Kabbalah, especially that of R. Moses Cordovero and his school. In any case, it seems obvious that the late fifteenth-century Spanish conception of demonic magic, or the much older magical practice of creating a golem, were rejected by eighteenth-century Hasidism, in favor of the Italian type of magic.

Last but not least; though the Italian type of magic seems to be closest to the Beshtian magic, the latter involves an important characteristic missing in Italian magic. The achievement of the Besht, as well as his self-consciousness, is directed toward the community, theoretically even to the entire people of Israel. As against the individualistic tendency of authors like Alemanno, eighteenth-century Hasidism focused on the well-being of a people. According to the famous letter of the Besht to his brother-in-law, the dissemination of his teaching will have an eschatological significance. At least according to this document, the magical and the mystical teachings of the Besht have messianic implications and he may be regarded as a redemptive figure whose activity includes magical facets. Let me quote the pertinent passage of this highly interesting document:

I⁸⁶ asked the Messiah: When do you come? And he answered: You will know [the time] which is when your doctrine will be revealed in public and it will be disclosed to the world, and your fountains will well outside, what I have taught you and you apprehended, and also they [i.e., the people of Israel] will be able to perform the unifications and the ascents [of the soul] as you do, and then the shells⁸⁷ will be abolished and then there will be a time of good-will and redemption. And I was surprised by this [answer] and I was deeply sorrowful because of the length of time when this will be possible; however, from what I have learned there, the three things which are remedies and three divine names, it is easy to learn and to explain. [Then] my mind was calmed and I thought that it is possible for my contemporaries to attain this degree and aspect by these [practices], as I do, namely to be able to accomplish the ascents of souls and they will be able to study and become like me.⁸⁸

The Besht brought down, like R. Akiva in the *Heikhalot* literature,⁸⁹ the means to ascend on high in order to study the secrets that will pave the way to the advent of the Messiah. As the Besht indicated, this technique of ascent included divine names, but also certain remedies whose nature

is obscure. I translated the Hebrew term *Seggilot* as remedies not only because this is the most plausible rendering from the semantic point of view but also because of a parallel to this Hasidic text, to be found in an early medieval treatise on magic. I refer to *Shimmushei Torah*, a tract explaining the magical feats that can be accomplished by various passages in the Pentateuch. In the introduction to this text, Moses is portrayed as ascending on high in order to receive the Torah and afterward to contest with the hostile angels. He prevails victorious and these angels offer him, together with the Torah, "a remedy [*devar refwah*] and the secret of the names that can be derived from each and every pericope and their [magical] uses."⁹⁰ Thus, the work of Moses seems to be similar to that of the Besht. Both brought down divine names, which are at the same time magical names, in addition to other things, which apparently are medical remedies. As such, the revelation of a mystical technique of ascent and the magical remedies are part, in the Hasidic text, of the dissemination of the Beshtian doctrine, which opens the way to the Messiah. No less than earlier mystical masters who had engaged in magic as part of a redemptive enterprise, the Besht, the Master of the divine name, likewise understood his activity as having redemptive purposes. I wonder whether the use of the Torah as an instrument enabling the Besht some clairvoyant phenomena is not related to the magical understanding of the secrets of the Torah as divine names. Although bibliomancy is by no means a novel magical technique,⁹¹ the way the Besht understood it seems to differ from the more common magical usage because he asserted that the primordial light inherent in the Torah is the medium of his clairvoyance.

Finally, before completing my proposal as to the nature of the magic of the Besht, let me quote, in extenso, an unedited text of Solomon Maimon, who flourished in the generation of the Maggid of Mezheridch, the most important disciple of the Besht. This text, as can easily be seen, is a clear exposition of the astro-magical lore that corresponds to the Italian magic, and therefore serves as important evidence that Polish authors were familiar with the same type of magic that was cultivated by Renaissance Jewish authors:

It is well known in the science of the planets, that when someone will make a peculiar image from a peculiar matter which is connected with a peculiar planet, as they [the ancestors] said,⁹² "There is no [leaf of] grass on earth, etc., — and he will place it under the power of the above-mentioned planet, when the latter is at its ascendant, and in the house of its glory, then will the power of the star pour upon that image and it [the image] will speak⁹³ and perform certain operations, and they are the Teraphim,⁹⁴ which are mentioned in the book of the Prophets.⁹⁵ Likewise when a person prepares

himself for that, for example to receive the power and spiritual force of the planet Saturn, he has to dress [in] black and he will wrap himself in black [clothes] and will cover the place he stood upon with black clothes and will eat things which increase the dark bile, which are under the dominion of Saturn⁹⁶. . . . Then the power and the spiritual force of the above-mentioned planet will pour upon the person and this is the essence of the prophecy of Ba'al and the prophets of Ashtoret and similar [phenomena]. . . . According to the view of the Kabbalists, the entire Torah and all the commandments are befitting preparations [made] in order to receive the requested influxes, in a perfect way, without the mixture of any deficiency and this is the focus upon which the commandments concentrate, those connected with a certain time or a certain place or with certain operations and all of them are intended for themselves in a very precise fashion, so that if a certain matter is amiss, the requested operation will not be accomplished. . . . And this is the building of the Temple,⁹⁷ the courtyard and the sanctuary and the adytum and its instruments: the table, the Menorah, and the altars and the basin and its foundation and all kinds of priestly garments⁹⁸ and all the sorts of sacrifices and all of them are based upon what we have mentioned."⁹⁹

As we can see, Maimon still believed in the same type of magical religiousness characteristic of hermetic magic of the medieval and Renaissance periods. However, this type of magic was considered by Maimon an idolatrous practice, which had a structure similar to the sacrosanct service of the temple. This reticence of Maimon is similar to the hesitation of Cordovero to subscribe openly to the composition of amulets in accordance to magico-astral criteria. The peculiar details of temple worship were regarded by Maimon as a way to ensure the descent of the supernal influx, which stems from the Sefirot, not from the planets in the magico-astral ritual.

IV

An interesting magical conception that emerged from Spanish Kabbalistic magic is the view that the Kabbalist may perform magical techniques that will ensure revelations.¹⁰⁰ These practices are overtly magic: they are based on incantations and pronunciations of divine names that summon angelic and demonic entities called down in order to reveal more practical issues. What seems to be obvious in the *Book of the Responding [Entity]* is the fact that no particular supernal or infernal being was considered the major, not to say the unique, source of revelation. The magical Kabbalist in Spain was not, on the basis of the extant material, in a continual

relationship with one source of revelation, which might have been appointed over this particular human being.¹⁰¹

However, in the sixteenth century, we find an articulated conception of the angelic mentor, the Maggid, which emerged through study of the Torah by a certain person and remained in contact with this person. Similar to practices of incubation, these techniques for receiving information from above become increasingly influential. R. Joseph Caro, the most important halakic authority, was regularly visited by such a Maggid,¹⁰² and after him several other examples of alleged possessors of angelic personal tutors are known in the Kabbalistic literature. Famous figures like R. Shelomo Alkabez, R. Shelomo Molkho, R. Moses Cordovero, R. Hayyim Vital, R. Sampson of Ostropoler, or R. Moses Hayyim Luzzatto, to mention only the most important names, were visited by Maggidim. The magical element is not always obvious in the techniques to summon the Maggidim, and I assume that this element was deliberately attenuated by these authors or by the redactors of their works, as seems to be the case as far as Karo is concerned.¹⁰³ However, as late as the eighteenth century, Luzzatto seems to have used magical devices to invoke his Maggid.

Simultaneous with the emergence of the Maggidic phenomena, another paranormal psychological phenomenon came to the fore in Jewish circles, the *dibbuk*, possession by the spirit of a demon or a deceased person.¹⁰⁴ This phenomenon is almost unknown in medieval Jewish texts. It explodes, however, in an extraordinary way in the second third of the sixteenth century. Evidence for this type of possession increased in the remaining decades of this century in a geometrical rate, becoming, at the turn of the seventeenth century, a common phenomenon, testified to by numerous descriptions, in comparison with the absence of evidence in the first third of the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁵ I mention the proliferation of this phenomenon because it may be regarded as an instance of "inverse Maggidism." In sharp contrast to the Maggidic experience, depending as it did on the study of the Torah or other canonical texts, and therefore an eminently masculine prerogative, *dibbuk* possession experiences prevailed in women, who, by the standards of the times, were considered to be ignorant.¹⁰⁶ Sometimes, the "negative" possession experience was related to a young boy, again an implicit example of ignorance. Whereas the appearance of the *Maggid* was regarded as an award to holy persons for their eminence in study, and therefore as a positive revelation, possession was invariably considered a negative revelation, sometimes being a form of punishment for a hidden sin. Last but not least; the *Maggid* was

invoked by magical techniques, whereas the *dibbuk* was exorted by other magical techniques.

The simultaneity of the appearance of these two phenomena and their "inverted" affinity are even more striking if we recall that a person who was visited by a *Maggid*, R. Joseph Karo, was at the same time the first known Jewish exorcist in the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁷ Although this may well be a matter of chance, it was nevertheless portentous: positive and negative revelatory experiences turn more influential in both the elite and in popular circles, approximately at the same time. This assault of the supernatural is accompanied, as we have seen above, by the increasing interest in and practice of magic. It seems that the medieval period collapsed, opening the way not so much to a "rational" *weltanschauung* as to mystico-magical revelry.

The ascent of magic, which took place together with that of revelatory experiences, can be understood as the highlighting of already existing Kabbalistic and magical elements presented now in a more detailed way, given the explosion of the Kabbalistic creation characteristic of the sixteenth century. Since the composition of the *Book of the Responding [Entity]*, we witness a conspicuous process of revealing and systematizing the more esoteric Kabbalistic doctrines, a process that contributed to the clarification of Kabbalistic conceptions, and with the passage of time, to their dissemination in relatively larger circles.

This description of the dissemination of paranormal experiences, directly related to magical practices, "incorcism" in the case of the *Maggid*, and exorcism in the case of the *dibbuk*, is based on evidence in scholarly literature. It may well be possible that the real situation was different. The same practices might have been disseminated in the Middle Ages among Jews, but they were reticent to commit the relevant facts to writing, whereas since the period of the Renaissance, the policy of documentation changed for one reason or another. Therefore, instead of a real change in the type of experiences that was cultivated by, or haunted, some Jews, there was apparently only a change in readiness to describe these experiences. However, for the time being it seems that the assumption that there was indeed a real change, not merely a literary one, is preferable.

V

At this stage of our reflection on magic and its place in Judaism since the late fifteenth century, it would be proper to ask, How was it possible that a religion whose basic canonical books, the Bible and the talmudic and midrashic literature, are declaratively antimagical, or at least neutral to

magic, was able to absorb such an amount of magical conceptions? I should like to stress that we are dealing here with the Renaissance period and therefore not with ignoramuses, for whom biblical imperatives were vague statements to be forgotten as soon as a hard problem presented itself and demanded a solution of a magical nature. The figures we have dealt with were, it is proper to stress, part of the Jewish elite. The answer to this quandary seems to lie in the processes that preceded the magical transformation of the late fifteenth century. Since the ninth century, and in a more rapid way, since the beginning of the thirteenth, Judaism absorbed or extended at least two articulated religious superstructures: the philosophical and the Kabbalistic. These superstructures had validated, each in its particular way, the basic meaning of Jewish religious activity, sometimes also the significance of the history of the people of Israel. Sometimes they supplied even comprehensive pictures of the world into which Jewish religious activities were integrated. This opening of the Jewish elite to overall superstructures, which at the end of the fifteenth century became accepted theologies, invited or at least facilitated the integration of other comprehensive visions of the world, especially those with a certain affinity to the two superstructures already in place. Kabbalistic magic of the type of the *Book of the Responding [Entity]* and philosophical magic dominant in the works of Alemanno were absorbed for they were considered to be the crown of an accepted superstructures. If Kabbalah highlights the esoteric significance of Judaism, why should the most powerful aspect of this lore, the practical Kabbalah, be excluded from the more comprehensive picture of Judaism, particularly in the historical circumstances that make this kind of lore highly effective in solving historical problems? If the Neoplatonic and hermetic views were already part of Jewish culture, why should the practical applications of these theories be excluded from a Jewish world picture that could compete with the contemporaneous Christian worldview prevalent in Alemanno's immediate vicinity?

Another factor that contributed to the emergence of magic as a licit practice among the Jewish elite was the prevailing conception that important figures in the development of Jewish mysticism were accomplished magicians. The ancient masters of the *Heikhalot* literature, R. Akiva, for example, were considered to be in possession of knowledge of the divine names that constituted the main instrument of Jewish magic. Thus, for example, there are legends related to R. Yehudah He-Hasid and R. Eleazar of Worms, the two founders of the twelfth-thirteenth-century Ashkenazi Hasidism, as cognizant of, and eventually even as practitioners of magic.¹⁰⁸ Nahmanides, a paragon of early Kabbalah, was de-

scribed as using practical Kabbalah.¹⁰⁹ Even Maimonides, the most bitter opponent of magic in Judaism, was portrayed, in a spurious epistle forged by Kabbalists, as proposing the use of a series of magical devices that included a combination of incubation, astral magic, and the pronunciation of letters.¹¹⁰ The accumulative impact of these legends must have contributed to the acceptance of both philosophical magic and practical Kabbalah as the epitome of the highest form of Jewish religiousness.

It is well known that in the sixteenth century, R. Isaac Luria, the most important exponent of Kabbalah, was portrayed as a person who had paranormal spiritual capacities, and was an expert in an array of magical fields like chiromancy.¹¹¹ It is primarily this image, together with his being the revelator of a comprehensive Kabbalistic system, that was prevalent among the popular masses, as well as among the Kabbalists.

Ancient Judaism, a religion that deliberately avoided in its canonical writings the construction of elaborate theologies consisting of dogmatic statements, changed dramatically in the Middle Ages when the sophistication of Kabbalistic theosophies or of Jewish philosophical theologies could easily compete with parallel phenomena in Islam or Christianity. The appearance of elaborated superstructures opened the way to the acceptance of the magical transformation of these theologies as part of the infiltrations of alien elements, as the Arabic magic in fourteenth-century Spain had entered Judaism, for example, or by the revitalization of ancient Jewish magic by certain historical circumstances, as in the case of the *Book of the Responding [Entity]*.

Last but not least; the spread of religious knowledge since the invention of printing influenced in a negative way the extent of circulation of the magical versions of Jewish theologies. Neither the works of Yohanan Alemanno and those major works of Yagel where the positive appreciation of magic was elaborated, nor the *Book of the Responding [Entity]* were printed by Kabbalists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Considered pernicious for the masses, these works remained in manuscripts until now, being only the object of curiosity on the part of some few scholars. Only by the attenuation of the magical aspect of the descending theory, when it was transposed on a strong mystical key, permitted the influence of this type of magic in Judaism. It seems that no popular form of Judaism can prevail when a major change in its halakho-centric nature takes place.

One last remark: designating Jewish persons who dealt with magic as magicians is, we must be aware of it, a projection of our terminology on a series of figures, none of whom would have agreed with this description. Moreover, putting together so different persons as della Reina and the

Besht is indeed dangerous from the phenomenological point of view. Not only are they acting in different places and times, but even their mystical and magical assumptions vary considerably. The previous attempt to describe them in one or two major frames of mind, two types of magic, does not assume a *magia perennis*, one orally transmitted, but written texts that mediated between persons who understood them in different ways at different times. A more detailed and elaborate discussion of each of these figures will isolate the idiosyncratic features of each of them, including major differences between the representatives of the same type of magic, "Spanish" or "Italian."

However, the present endeavor was undertaken in order to propose a primary typology, a frame for a more elaborate treatment of magic. As such, this attempt suffers from oversimplification, which is evident from the focused reference to redemptive interests in particular, ignoring to a great extent other dimensions—mystical, social, historical, personal. Because my major interest was to characterize the outstanding assumptions of the two types of magic and to present them in comparative juxtaposition, as also to compare them to Christian attitudes to magic of the same period, the present frame did not allow a more extensive analysis of more variegated figures like R. Moses Hayyim Luzzatto or the Besht. Affinities between the Kabbalistic magicians and the concepts of Holy Man, Divine Man, Messiah, and between medieval Jewish magicians and ancient ones,¹¹² and between medieval figures and concepts and their Jewish and non-Jewish predecessors, still await a more sensitive description. If the primary purpose of pointing to the existence of a main magical interest in certain segments of the Jewish elite in the Renaissance and post-Renaissance periods was attained, this essay has fulfilled the modest aim of its author.

Notes

1. *Spiritual and Demonic Magic: From Ficino to Campanella* (London, 1958).
2. *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago, 1979), pp. 44–156.
3. "Magia e astrologia nel Rinascimento," in his book *Medievo e Rinascimento* (Bari, 1954), pp. 153 ff.
4. "Le problème de la magie naturelle à la Renaissance" in *Magia, Astrologia e Religione nel Rinascimento* (Wroclaw, 1974), pp. 48–79.
5. See, e.g., the works of R. Yohanan Alemanno, whose conception of magic will be addressed here. However, his works have yet to be printed and studied; for the time being, see my "The Magical and Neoplatonic Interpretations of the Kabbalah in the Renaissance," in *Jewish Studies in the Sixteenth Century*, B. Cooperman, ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), pp. 186–242.

6. See my "Hermeticism and Judaism" in a collection of articles on hermeticism edited by A. Debus and I. Merckel, forthcoming.
7. See my "The Study Program of R. Yohanan Alemanno," *Tarbiz*, 48 (1978) 311–12 (in Hebrew).
8. See my "Interpretations," pp. 208–10.
9. *Hei ha-'Olamim*, MS, Mantua, Jewish Community 21, fol. 51a; see my "Study Program," pp. 319–20.
10. See my "Interpretations," pp. 319–28.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 213–15.
12. On the tephaphim as Alemanno conceived them, see R. Abraham ibn Ezra's and R. Bahyah ben Asher's commentaries on Genesis 31:19 and Georges Vajda, *Judah ben Nissim ibn Malka, philosophe juif marocaine* (Paris, 1954), p. 112, note 3, pp. 149–50, and my "Hermeticism," note 41. See also, below, the text of Salomon Maimon, printed from his manuscript, and my "Study Program," p. 320; *idem*, "Interpretations," pp. 232–42.
13. See my "Magic Temples and Cities in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance—A Passage of Mas'udi as a Possible Source for Yohanan Alemanno," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 3 (1981–1982) 189, and my "Hermeticism."
14. Compare the Kabbalistic view of the correspondence between the lower, human form and the supernal, sefirotic *anthropos*, as a basic reason for theurgical influence on the performance of commandments. See my *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven, 1988), pp. 173–91.
15. "Beit Ya'ar ha-Levanon," MS, Oxford, Neubauer Catalogue 1304, fol. 10b.
16. See Walker, *Magic* (note 1, above), pp. 23, 25.
17. See my "Hermeticism."
18. On Kabbalah and magic in this circle of Kabbalists, see my "Inquiries in the Doctrine of *Sepher ha-Meshiv*," *Sefunot*, 17 (1983) 185–266 (in Hebrew).
19. See my "The Origin of Alchemy According to Zosimos and a Hebrew Parallel," *REJ*, 145 (1986) 120–23.
20. The connection between the revelation of magic and eschatology is described in detail in a study now in progress.
21. See my "Interpretations," pp. 215–29.
22. This issue demands an elaborate study.
23. See my "Differing Conceptions of Kabbalah in the Early Seventeenth Century," in *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, I. Twersky and B. Septimus, eds. (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), pp. 178–97.
24. See my "Inquiries," pp. 232–43.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 234–35.
26. See the text printed by Gershom Scholem, "The 'Maggid' of R. Yosef Taitatzak and the Revelations Attributed to Him," *Sefunot*, 11 (1971–1978) 88 (in Hebrew).
27. See his epistle still in manuscript, New York, JTS 1822, fol. 153b.

28. *Conclusiones sive Theses DCCCC*, Boghdan Kieszkowski, ed. (Geneva, 1973), p. 78.
29. See Yates, *Bruno*, pp. 88–89.
30. See David Ruderman, *The Perfect Kingship: Kabbalah, Magic, and Science in the Cultural Universe of a Jewish Physician* (forthcoming, Harvard University Press, 1988), chap. 7.
31. See my "Study Program," pp. 312, 325–27.
32. See my "Origin," p. 118.
33. On the more general distinction between a more philosophical and universalistic Kabbalah that flourished in Renaissance Italy, and a more mythical, particularistic Kabbalah that flourished in Spain in the eve of the expulsion and among most of the exiled Spanish Kabbalists, see my "Universalism and Particularism in Kabbalah: 1480–1650," a paper submitted to a conference at Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem, January 1986.
34. See my "The Attitude to Christianity, in *Sepher ha-Meshiv*," *Immanuel*, 12 (1981) 77–95.
35. See my "Types of Redemptive Activities in the Middle Ages," in *Messianism and Eschatology*, Z. Baras, ed. (Jerusalem, 1984), pp. 275–78 (in Hebrew).
36. See my "Origin," pp. 118–20.
37. Gate 10, chap. 1. See my *Kabbalah*, pp. 110–11.
38. *Pardes Rimmonim*, *ibid.*
39. In Kabbalah, gold is a symbol of the attribute of stern judgment.
40. Gate 10, chap. 1.
41. In Hebrew, *hitbodedut*. For the significance of this term, see my, "*Hitbodedut* as Concentration in Ecstatic Kabbalah," in *Jewish Spirituality* (World Spirituality, vol. 14), A. Green, ed. (New York, 1986), pp. 405–38.
42. Gate 27, chap. 2.
43. *Pardes Rimmonim*, Gate 27, chap. 1. See my *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (Albany, 1988), pp. 138–39.
44. *Sefer 'Asarah Ma'amarot* (Jerusalem, 1983), part 2, fol. 41b.
45. See his *Tiferet 'Adam* (Lvov, n.d.), fol. 2b.
46. *Ben Porat Yoseph* (Lemberg, n.d.), fol. 17c. This description, derived from Cordovero's thought, recurs in a series of Hasidic texts.
47. On the whole issue, see my "Perception of Kabbalah in the Second Half of the 18th Century," a paper delivered at the symposium on eighteenth-century Jewish Thought, Harvard University, 1984.
48. See my "Inquiries," pp. 244–50.
49. Yosef Dan, "The Story of Rabbi Joseph de la Reyna," *Sefunot*, ed. I. Ben-Zvi-M. Benayahu, 6 (1962) 311–26 (in Hebrew).
50. See my "Types," pp. 275–78.
51. See Harold Fish, "The Pact with the Devil," *The Yale Review*, 69 (1980) 520–32, esp. 529.
52. Cf. the version of R. Yehudah Hallelwah; see my "Inquiries," p. 230.

53. Ibid.
54. Scholem, "Maggid" (note 26, above), p. 109; see my "Inquiries," p. 249.
55. See Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (New York, 1977), pp. 16–59.
56. See my "Inquiries," p. 254, note 29.
57. See my "Attitude," pp. 85–91.
58. See Scholem, "Maggid," pp. 77–78.
59. See note 20, above.
60. See my "Shelomo Molkho as Magician," *Sefunot*, 18 (1985) 194–98 (in Hebrew).
61. See Molkho's *Hayyat ha-Kanah* (Amsterdam, 1658), fol. 6a.
62. See Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi, The Mystical Messiah* (Princeton, 1973), pp. 747–48, 770–74.
63. See my "Shelomo," p. 197.
64. See my "Inquiries," pp. 193–95, 201.
65. "Jonah as the Messiah ben Joseph," in *Studies in Jewish Mysticism, Philosophy, and Ethical Literature Presented to Isaiah Tishby*, J. Dan and J. Hacker, eds. (Jerusalem, 1986), pp. 279–303 (in Hebrew); idem, "Mysticism and Reality: Towards a Portrait of the Martyr and Kabbalist, R. Samson Ostropoler," in *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, I. Twersky and B. Septimus, eds. (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), pp. 221–55.
66. Liebes, "Mysticism," pp. 243–49.
67. As to the date of the emergence of the redemptive role of the golem, modern scholarship agrees to a later date—generally, the early twentieth century; see Arnold L. Goldsmith, *The Golem Remembered, 1909–1980* (Detroit, 1981), pp. 35–36. However, the possibility that a much more ancient motif surfaced at this period, and was not invented then, cannot be excluded.
68. See his *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (New York, 1965), p. 184; Bettina Knapp, "The Golem and Ecstatic Mysticism," *Journal of the Altered States of Consciousness*, 3 (1977–1978) 355–69.
69. *An Autobiography* (Boston, 1888), pp. 158–59.
70. See *In the Praise of Baal Shem Tov (Shivhei ha-Besht)*, D. Ben Amos and J. R. Mintz, eds. (London, 1979), pp. 49, 89.
71. For a detailed analysis of the Cordoverian and Hasidic views concerning the talismatic-hermetic use of letters, see my "Perception" (note 47, above).
72. Abraham J. Heschel, *The Circle of the Baal Shem Tov: Studies in Hasidism*, S. H. Dresner, ed. (Chicago and London, 1985), pp. 167–70.
73. Ibid., p. 15. For the magical use of the name of the Besht in another context see *In the Praise*, p. 181: "Since the name Israel, son of Eliezer, is a name, it means that he is a *zaddik*." This passage was kindly drawn to my attention by Prof. E. Etkes. Therefore, a contemporary of the founder of Hasidism, who apparently was not a *hasid* at the moment he was convinced by the Besht's extraordinary powers, was cognizant of the peculiar powers of the name of a *zaddik*, just as the text of R. Menahem Azariah of Fano's passage indicates.

On the basis of the preceding material it is easily understandable why Joseph Perl, in his sarcastic criticism of Hasidism, hints that the name of the Besht, transcribed according to a cryptic alphabet, was a magical name that could open all locks: see Ch. Shmeruk and Sh. Werses, eds., *Joseph Perl, Hasidic Tales and Letters* (Jerusalem, 1969), pp. 116, 229.

In this context it is highly significant that in the circle of the great-grandson of the Besht, R. Nahman of Braslav, a treatise enumerating all the names of the Righteous, beginning with Adam, was composed, its recitation having overt magical influence. This work, *Shemot ha-Zaddikim*, went through several editions, some of them together with R. Nahman's *Sefer ha-Middot*. Thanks are due to Mr. Mikhah Openheim from New York who drew this work to my attention.

74. See *Mayyim Rabbim* (Brooklyn, 1979), fol. 42b, quoting from the Seer's *Zikkaron Zot*, in *Sefarim Kedoshim Mi-Kol Talmidei Ha-Besht ha-Kadosh* (Brooklyn, 1981), vol. 2, fol. 15c. See also fol. 31c.

75. *Hiyyut*.

76. On this magical view, see my "The Concept of the Torah in the Heikhalot Literature and Its Metamorphoses in Kabbalah," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, 1 (1981) 52–58 (in Hebrew).

77. I.e., *ruhaniut*.

78. *Mayyim Rabbim*, fol. 23a.

79. 'Or. According to a Hasidic tradition, which cannot now be located, mentioned to me by my wife, Shoshannah Idel, the word *refwah* consists of two roots, 'or and *poh*—namely, "light" and "here," these words containing the consonants of *Refwah*.

80. See Eugene F. Rice, "The *De Magia Naturali* of Jacques Lefevre d'Eta-ple," in *Philosophy and Humanism: Essays in Honor of P. O. Kristeller*, E. P. Mahoney, ed. (Leiden, 1976), pp. 24–25, and Zambelli, "Problème" (note 4, above), pp. 65–66. For medieval studies on astrological medicine, see Marcelino V. Amasuno, *Un Texto Medico-Astrologico del siglo XIII: "Eclipse del Sol" del licenciado Diego de Torres* (Salamanca, 1972); Joseph Shatzmiller, "In Search of the 'Book of Figures': Medicine and Astrology in Montpellier at the Turn of the Fourteenth Century," *AJS Review*, 7–8 (1982–1983) 403. On magical healing in Judaism, see the remarks of Hyman C. Enelow, *Selected Works* (Kingsport, Tenn., 1935), vol. 4, pp. 487–89.

81. See Ruderman, *Kingship* (note 30, above).

82. Venice, 1587, fol. 3b, 16ab, 17ab, 27a–28a. Compare the slightly different version of this treatise in MS, Oxford, Catalogue Neubauer 2310, fol. 4b, 15a, 24ab.

83. See R. Eleazar (the son of R. Elimelekh) of Lysansk's *Iggeret ha-Kodesh* and the criticism of this issue in Joseph Perl; see Abraham Rubinstein, ed., *Ueber das Wesen der Sekte Chasidim* (Jerusalem, 1977), p. 101.

84. In his disciple R. Israel of Kuznitz's *Avodat Israel* (Munkach, 1928), fol. 70b. Similar views recur also in R. Elimelekh's *No'am Elimelekh*.

85. See Isaac Alfasi, "Comments on 'Enoshiut and Miracles in Israel," in

Sefer ha-Besht, I. L. ha-Kohen Maimon, ed. (Jerusalem, 1960), pp. 121–29 (in Hebrew). See also Joseph Weiss, “The Great Maggid’s Theory of Contemplative Magic,” *HUCA*, 31 (1960) 137–47; idem, *Studies in Eastern European Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford: University Press, 1985), pp. 126–30.

86. The Besht.

87. *Kelippot*, a Kabbalistic term referring to impure forces.

88. See Joshua Mondschein, *Migdal ‘Oz* (Kefar Habad, 1980), p. 124 (in Hebrew). See also *In the Prize* (note 70, above), p. 57.

89. See *Heikhalot Zutarti*, R. Elijor, ed. (Jerusalem, 1982), p. 22.

90. See *Ozar Midrashim*, J. D. Eisenstein, ed. (New York, 1915), p. 307.

91. See Joshua Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition* (New York, 1934), p. 216.

92. *Genesis Rabba*, X, 6. See also MS, Berlin, p. 33, where this dictum is interpreted again in a mystical vein.

93. Compare Alemanno’s text analyzed in my “Interpretations” (note 5, above), p. 213.

94. See note 12, above.

95. The magical nature of this book perfectly fits a quotation from the magical *Book of the Religions of the Prophets*; see my “Interpretations,” p. 204.

96. Compare the pseudo ibn Ezra’s *Sefer ha-Azanim*, M. Grossberg, ed. (London, 1901), esp. pp. 17–18.

97. See my “Interpretations,” pp. 203–7.

98. See above, note 37, in the passage of Cordovero.

99. Olim MS, Berlin, pp. 130–32; presently the manuscript is in a private collection. The whole study will be discussed in detail in a larger study of Hasidic mysticism.

100. See my “Inquiries” (note 18, above), pp. 201–26.

101. *Ibid.*, pp. 189–91.

102. See R. J. Z. Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo, Lawyer and Mystic* (Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 257–86.

103. See my “Inquiries,” pp. 223–24.

104. Gedalyah Nigal, “*Dibbuk*” *Tales in Jewish Literature* (Jerusalem, 1983), pp. 15–60 (in Hebrew).

105. *Ibid.*, pp. 61–228, 265–66.

106. Yoram Bilu, “The Dibbuk in Judaism: Mental Disorder as Cultural Resource,” *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, 3 (1982–83) 529–63 (in Hebrew), printed as “The Taming of the Deviants and Beyond: An Analysis of *Dibbuk* Possession and Exorcism in Judaism,” *The Psychological Study of Society*, 11 (1985) 1–31.

107. See my “Inquiries,” pp. 224–25.

108. Joseph Dan, *The Esoteric Theology of Ashkenazi Hasidism* (Jerusalem, 1968), pp. 58–59, 74–75, 219 (Hebrew), and Scholem, *Kabbalah* (note 68, above), pp. 198–99.

109. See my “Inquiries,” p. 231, note 228.

110. G. Scholem, “MiHoker leMekubbal,” *Tarbiz*, 6 (1935) 94–95 (in Hebrew).

111. Lawrence Fine, “The Art of Metoposcopy: A Study in Isaac Luria’s Charismatic Knowledge,” *AJS Review*, 11 (1986) 79–101.

112. See Jack N. Lightstone, “Magicians, Holy Men, and Rabbis: Patterns of the Sacred in the Late Antique Judaism,” in W. Green, ed., *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, 1 (1985) 133–48; Jacob Neusner, *The Wonder-Working Lawyers of Talmudic Babylonia* (New York and London, 1987), pp. 46–70, 207–22, and the bibliography mentioned in the footnotes.